7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

159 civil officials, not of me"). He identifies himself with the Indians in the
875 fight against the competitive trucking cooperative ("Those who are with
563 him [Don Ramon] are traitors to the pueblo. They are being exploited by
177 him"). While he does not accuse Ramon's wife directly of witchcraft he
178 implies this in saying that people sign their candidate's nomination peti-
[754] tion for president because they are afraid Juana will use witchcraft. This is
[626] a characteristic mode of attacking one's enemies in the town. He claims credit for all of the innovations in the town which have won public approval—the highway, the water supply, electricity, and so forth.

622 The profit motive is inadequate to explain why Ladinos want to play
875 the role of cacique in these corporate Indian communities. One must seek
563 for an explanation instead in the social status they gain. While their jobs
177 are limited and usually frustrating and they can never be completely inte-
178 grated into the community, political activities offer them a larger arena in which they can derive personal satisfaction. The contrast between the schoolmaster's position in Tzo'ontahal before he became a political leader and his position after finding local supporters illustrates this. In the early days of his residence in town, when he built a chicken coop which extended a few feet beyond the grounds allotted to the schoolhouse, some Indians threatened to kill him. In 1957, I saw him trying to summon a policeman from the town hall, which was adjacent to the schoolhouse, to remove a boulder from the path so that a visiting friend could pass in his automobile. No one heeded his urgent shouts or the whistle he used to call children to school, although they were well aware of what he wanted. But by 1965 there was not a single important transaction which did not require consultation with the schoolteacher. Campesinos from as far as Villa Las Rosas came to request his advice and his help in approaching government agents. In projecting his political role, he gained support for projects
[653] which were of interest to him. When he had succeeded in getting the gov-
312 ernment to install water pipes and electricity, he talked the civil authori-
365 ties into building a kiosk, or bandstand, in the plaza. This was a fulfill-
345 ment of his ambition to make the town over in the image of a colonial Spanish pueblo. His final statement in the speech quoted above, "Today we see a kiosk, tomorrow we will have a telephone, telegraph, and a factory!" reveals the symbolic significance it had for him.